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The Story of The Bomb

Since the end of the Second World War, which the lying powers of capitalist propaganda said was "*a war to end war and make the world safe for peace and democracy*", there has been an unending series of wars, both large and small, and relatively localised.

An estimated 3 million people were killed in Vietnam in a war which raged on for more than twenty years, first under the British, then the French and finally under America with its intense bombing policy. More bombs were rained down, upon a largely peasant population in a small country, than the world had ever seen. "*By 1969, over 70 tons of bombs for every square mile of Vietnam, that is, about 500 pounds for every person in the country*" (Harriet Ward, WORLD POWERS IN THE 20th CENTURY, pp 285-6).

Before this madness, there was Korea (1950-53), another million dead in a bloodbath which came close to drawing China into conflict with the US because of the closeness of China's border. This war also brought the demand for the use of nuclear weapons.

In the war between Iraq and Iran (1980-88), a further million people died. Throughout this intense and bloody war, Saddam Hussein was armed and supported by America. He was hanged in 2006 for going into business on his own, killing a fraction of the number killed in the US-backed Iran war.

America, the self-styled champion of freedom and democracy led the world into the nuclear weapons era.

Germany had already surrendered in May 1945 and Japan, in full retreat, was near defeat. Having tested an atomic bomb in the Mexican desert, America desperately needed a target to show the world what they had and to let the Russians know what the US was capable of.

America remains the only country to have used nuclear weapons on a human target and to have threatened their use several times since, most recently when the George W Bush administration threatened the use of "tactical" weapons in his war against Afghanistan.

Since the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, the world has lived in the shadow of a possible nuclear holocaust, in the knowledge that radioactive clouds and nuclear fallout could render the Earth uninhabitable. It is no doubt because the ruling capitalist class and their hangers-on would perish with the rest of us that no full-scale nuclear exchange has so far been launched.

With inevitable proliferation, India and Pakistan began the 21st century threatening each other with rockets carrying nuclear war-heads.

Religion has proven to be no deterrent. Christian America has used the bomb. Hindu India and Islamic Pakistan have threatened to, and Jewish Israel has a nuclear arsenal which it is prepared to use as a threat.

This insane, global, suicide syndrome is surely the ultimate indictment of capitalism, and yet even this rests upon the

acceptance by the working class of a system that exploits them as wage slaves. Before a single nuclear-power station generated any electricity, many tens of thousands had been killed by nuclear bombs and humanity had entered the era of Mutually Assured Destruction.

It is clear that protests and demonstrations over more than half-a-century have done nothing to remove the nuclear threat that capitalism has created.

History shows it is counter-productive merely to go to demonstrations attended sometimes by tens of thousands who then go and vote for the very political parties committed to keeping capitalism and its nuclear capabilities. Capitalist parties, be they Tory or Labour, Republican or Democrat, depend for their power on the votes of ordinary workers. Because of the perverse propaganda of capitalism, with its nationalism, patriotism, flags and religion, they are able to persuade workers that they have a stake in the system and that "*their*" country has to be defend itself against would-be attackers.

Blair used this spiel at the end of 2006 when he declared his government's intention to build a new generation of Trident missiles. Blair was not regarded as being criminally insane; he went on with the business of running British capitalism. Such is the normality of an inhuman society. The scientific knowledge, technical, industrial and human resources of society are used to create the means of universal destruction.

The fantasists and the dreamers are really those who treasure the delusion of capitalism disarmed - the system of profits and competition for markets and resources continuing, but without wars. The CND, the Stop the War Alliance and the loony leftists are among those in this category. Even so, let us not forget that the blind acceptance of capitalism by the Stop the War Alliance is such that they would have supported war against Iraq if endorsed by the United Nations.

The multi-layered, muddle-headed Left, has its supporters of wars thought to be for "*liberation*" of small oppressed countries against oppressive ones. Given the prevalence of political ignorance and confusion, and the acceptance of the "*my country*" perversion of capitalist nationalism, the capitalist class, who are the only ones with any interest at stake in wars, know that they can rely on the workers when the chips are down. They also know that governments elected by such an ignorant mass on reformist programmes to run capitalism will do their dirty work.

All of this speaks volumes for the crying need for a majority of the working class to understand and then to establish Socialism.

The story of the Bomb really cannot be separated from working class support for the grabbing ambitions of their rival masters.

Those tens of thousands of people who periodically protest behind banners demanding "*No More Trident*" are giving their tacit approval to all the other means of killing millions of people and destroying cities, towns and villages. They show no understanding of the fact that capitalism causes war and that the workers of the world share a common interest as an exploited class in getting rid of capitalism. In World War Two, 40 million workers were killed by their fellow workers for capitalist economic reasons that were no concern of theirs.

The use of nuclear weapons against Japan in August 1945 served the purpose of the American ruling class and their scientists by showing what such weapons could do to a live (human) target, and to demonstrate to their Russian "allies" in particular what they were capable of.

THE PENGUIN HISTORY OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY (p427) makes the point that:

At the beginning of August 1945 the Japanese government knew it was lost. Many of Japan's former conquests in the Pacific and much of South East Asia had already been retrieved... At home her cities were devastated by American bombing and her sea power, on which communications and safety from invasion had rested, were in ruins. At that moment two weapons of a destructive power hitherto unknown were dropped by the Americans with terrible effect on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki .

Since the end of the Second World War, the USA and the former USSR have played the game of jockeying for position strategically and militarily around the world against the background of increasing stockpiles of nuclear weapons. Each side cold-bloodedly has been considering the possibility of destroying many hundreds of 'targets' and setting this against a similar scale of retaliation.

In the late 1980s the International Institute of Strategic Studies produced an estimate of strategic nuclear warheads which showed the USA with 10,174 and the USSR with 9,987 plus (Paul Kennedy, THE RISE AND FALL OF THE GREAT POWERS, p 651).

Britain's Trident goes back to that period and because of its "excessive striking power" was then and is still part of the threat posed by capitalism to mankind's existence.

Also it is clearly noted that, even in the days when Russia and China were being falsely presented as "*Communist*" brothers, they were making nuclear threats against each other. Discussing this, the above mentioned book says:

Hence the Soviets' repeated insistence that in any overall Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty with the United States the Anglo-French system [would] have to be taken into account and that the USSR must have a certain margin of nuclear force to take care of China (p 655).

How many of today's Labour voters and protestors are aware that it was the post-war Labour government that launched Britain into nuclear militarism? How many of them know that the Wilson government of 1975 had planned that, in the event of nuclear war, he (Wilson) would go to a bunker in the Cotswolds and art treasures would be buried in Wales? There was no plan for public evacuation (CEEFAX, 29 December 2006).

The urgent need of our time is to stop shouting slogans protesting about the effects of capitalism and rid the world of this war-making system. Socialism demands majority, democratic, conscious political action.

BACK TO BUSINESS

Despite the attempts by the Clapham-based Socialist Party to pull our web site it is now back in business with a range of Socialist material. We have also carried on our propaganda at Marchmont Street where the Clapham Party have tried to shut down the meetings. We still publish The SPGB, our official journal, under the banner of The Socialist Party of Great Britain. And Clapham's attempt to have socialists arrested for "*fraud*" has also failed with the police stating that they are not interested in what is purely a civil not a criminal matter. There are those who do not like us making references to Clapham in our journal. We say to these people what are you doing about Clapham's anti-socialist actions against those who agree with, defend and work within the SPGB's OBJECT AND DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES? If you are a member of the Clapham Party and consider yourself a Socialist you should ask yourself why you are still in this anti-socialist party. We have shown principle and a fighting spirit standing up to a vile and Stalinist politics. We were not going to roll over or run away from bully-boy tactics which have no place in a Socialist organisation. Political cowardice is for those who do nothing or acquiesce in preventing Socialists from putting the Socialist case against capitalism.

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Wars in Iraq and Other Places

"Do you feel that addressing the root causes of conflict is crucial for building peace?" (question in a recent leaflet by a think-tank, the Oxford Research Group). We would agree that the capitalist system is the root cause of war, hence the key to ending war is to organise to put an end to the capitalist system, as we have consistently argued.

We live in a world-wide capitalist system based on the profit motive, competition, the winning of markets and the destruction of competitors. Capitalism is made up of competing nation states, some dominant like the US, others less strong but no less destructive when pursuing their 'national' interests. There is a continual conflict over resources like

oil, over strategic points and trade routes. It is only within this framework that terrorism, national conflict, wars and civil wars have to be understood. As long as the world is organised on a capitalist economic basis, the never-ending rivalries will continue to produce conflict, varying from individual acts of terrorism to gigantic armed struggles spreading over all the oceans and continents of the world. The Socialist Party of Great Britain re-affirms that the interest of the working class - on whom the untold misery and suffering of conflict and war inevitably falls - lies in abolishing the cause of conflict. Only world socialism can end wars and conflict by abolishing class relations and nation states.

[SPGB leaflet]

To suggest, as the ORG do, that you can have capitalism without wars is to dream a utopian fantasy: often the best capitalism can offer is only a temporary truce or ceasefire.

It is wishful thinking too to demand that politicians be held to account for 'war crimes', as for instance in this statement:

"Nuremberg declared that aggressive war is the supreme international crime. They [Bush and Blair] should be tried along with Saddam Hussein," says Benjamin Ferencz, chief prosecutor of Nazi crimes at Nuremberg.

John Pilger, NEW STATESMAN, 18 September 2006

Moreover, the claim made by supposedly 'democratic' politicians that it is only evil dictatorships which flout international law and wage aggressive wars can be easily shown to be a falsehood.

Consider, for instance, some facts about past British military action against Kurdish communities in Iraq:
The British forces consisted solely of aeroplanes... The effect of our air attack was appalling. Some 700 of the tribesmen were killed and the rest, seized with panic, fled into the desert, where hundreds more must have perished from thirst. - Lord Thomson, Chief of the Air Ministry.

THE TIMES, 22 November 1924

Naturally, the Labour politicians responsible denied this had happened: Mr Leech, Under Secretary of the Air Ministry, declared that "*under our administration British air operations have caused no deaths*"(DAILY HERALD, 15 July 1924).

As for the, not very democratic, United States, that has long been one of the most militaristic states in the world, involved in countless wars and invasions, often justified by the deceitful claim that this is a fight to "*defend democracy and freedom*".

Lies and Leaders

It is almost unheard of for any war to be fought without the politicians involved telling lies. Kipling made this point, long ago :

*If any question why we died,
Tell them, because our fathers lied.*

Lying however can be counterproductive. Many who opposed the current Iraq war did so because of their disgust at the blatant lies being told by politicians: lies about Saddam's weapons of mass destruction, lies in Blair's dodgy dossier, the exaggeration of the alleged threat these weapons posed, and lies about the real - illegal, and so unadmitted and inadmissible - motive for the war, the Bush administration's aim of 'regime change'. All neatly summed up in the protest poster, BLIAR!

A small library of books have been published about Bush. Michael Moore, in his book STUPID WHITE MEN (2002), noted how useful the so-called "war on terror" would be for Bush - and Blair:

... The public lives in a state of panic. No one knows when the next attack will come.

... A few bombings in London and suddenly the government is allowed all sorts of secret powers to do what it wants to combat "terrorism"...

And so now we have Bush's war on terrorism. What a perfect excuse to distract people from the real problems which

face the world right now...

George Orwell had it pegged when he wrote 1984. What most people remember from that book is "Big Brother". But even more relevant today is the part about how The Leader needed to have a "permanent war". He needed to keep the citizens in perpetual fear of the enemy so they would give him all the power he desired (pp 259-260).

Another writer, Peter Singer (THE PRESIDENT OF GOOD AND EVIL, 2004), studied Bush's ethics, including his belief that he has a divine mission:

In 1999, as he prepared to run for president, he assembled leading pastors in the Texas governor's mansion and told them that he had been "called to seek a higher office." After September 11, 2001, he told Karl Rove, his political adviser, "I'm here for a reason."

In the month before he launched a war against Iraq, Bush attended the convention of National Religious Broadcasters, and listened without demur while he was described as "God's chosen man for this hour in our nation" (pp 98-99).

This conviction of a historic destiny is shared by another 'Great Man', his partner in crime, Tony Blair, who once famously declared: *"This is no time for soundbites, but I feel the hand of history on my shoulder."*

"The Role of the Individual in History"

Whether chosen by a supposedly omniscient God or not, politicians like Bush and Blair, clearly think their personal role is extremely important. But just how important *are* they? If either of them was doing something else other than politics, would there still be wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and possibly soon in Iran as well? What, if anything, would have been done differently? Indeed, though even their best friends would be unlikely to think of these two as Great Men, it is relevant to ask about the influence of 'great men' and 'leaders' generally in shaping historical events.

Mostly, the mass media's paid reporters and commentators focus on the role of individual politicians, e.g.:
A mendacious attack by Mr Blair to cover up his fatal misjudgement... For all Mr Blair's personal salesmanship at the time, this began as a highly unpopular war, and it remains one (editorial, THE INDEPENDENT, 13 January 2007).

Like most of those who protested against the war, THE INDEPENDENT would have found it quite possible to support it - if only it had been a more popular war, if Blair had been more persuasive, and if it had been 'legal'.

Legal or not, Socialists would have opposed it: no capitalist war is ever fought in the interest of the working class. The only war deserving our support is the class war.

Marxists have been accused of eliminating or downplaying the role of the individual. If we argue that the class struggle is all-important, how can we account for the importance of ideas and of outstanding individuals? But this argument is based on a misunderstanding of the materialist conception of history.

As Marx and Engels argued in THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO:

The charges against communism made from a religious, a philosophical, and, generally, from an ideological standpoint, are not deserving of serious examination.

Does it require deep intuition to comprehend that man's ideas, views and conceptions, in one word, man's consciousness, changes with every change in the conditions of his material existence, in his social relations and in his social life?

If we apply this general thesis to President Bush, we will find that, in relation to Iraq, he is acting and only able to act in accordance with what he and others suppose to be the 'national interest' of the United States. After all, it has long been a key plank in US foreign policy, since World War One onwards, to ensure control of Middle Eastern oil supplies. More recently, the US economy has become no longer self-sufficient in energy resources and so is increasingly dependent on imported oil, for industry, travel and transport, and - no small matter - for military use.

Also, whatever his own opinions, it is obvious that Bush could not have had much political influence, if any, on the decision to invade Iraq unless he had first achieved power as President. It could be argued that any person in that position would probably have adopted the same policy. If so, the position or office was the crucial factor, much more so than the character of the individual temporarily occupying the White House. Only in office, as Commander-in-Chief, could Bush, convinced of his historic, divine mission, set in train armies and air-forces.

As the supreme political representative of United States capital, of the American capitalist class, and of their various commercial, industrial and financial interests, Bush, like his predecessors, acted in line with what he and others perceived those 'national interests' to be. In Iraq this meant taking control of the government ('regime change'), privatising industries, banning trade unions, and establishing large air force bases, of strategic importance in relation to the significant oil and gas resources of the Middle East and the Central Asian Republics.

As Marx and Engels noted:

Capital is a collective product, and only by the united action of many members, nay, in the last resort, only by the united action of all members of society, can it be set in motion. Capital is... not a personal, it is a social power.

COMMUNIST MANIFESTO

The 'globalisation' so much applauded by today's capitalists - forever hopeful of finding workers able to work for a bare pittance - was already anticipated in the COMMUNIST MANIFESTO, as was the current struggle for control of essential raw materials, especially oil.

The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country. All old-established industries... are dislodged by new industries... by industries that no longer work up indigenous raw material, but raw material drawn from the remotest zones, industries whose products are consumed, not only at home, but in every quarter of the globe. In place of the old wants, satisfied by the productions of the country, we find new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes. In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal interdependence of nations.

"Universal interdependence of nations" finds its modern expression in global institutions like the UN Security Council, in powerful international economic institutions like the World Bank, the OECD and the IMF, and in the increasingly global military alliance of NATO.

How to put an end to wars

Those who, in the 20th century, established first the League of Nations and later the United Nations did so in the mistaken belief and hope that such international institutions could put an end to wars.

Already in 1919 the Socialist Party of Great Britain predicted the future ineffectiveness of the League of Nations:
... the 'League' is a mere phantasm, a spineless, parchment entity which can have no power or influence in the real world - the world of strife for economic interests.

SOCIALIST STANDARD, July 1919

As for the United Nations, which has proved to be unable to act effectively in Yugoslavia, in Darfur (Sudan), in the Democratic Republic of Congo, in Kashmir, Palestine, Lebanon, Chechnya, and Rwanda, to give just a few instances, its failure too is easily explained:

It has often been suggested that the UN should have a permanent international force at its disposal, but this has not been taken up by the major Powers. On occasions they have, it is true, agreed to send UN observers to trouble spots to preserve 'law and order' and prevent the spread of disorder. This serves to keep the present balance of world power... There is not the slightest chance of the major powers agreeing to arm the UN with a powerful force... But if they did they would be unable to agree as to how and when it should be used.

SPGB pamphlet, THE SOCIALIST PARTY AND WAR, 1970, p51

In an earlier pamphlet, WAR AND THE WORKING CLASS (1936), we argued that war "is but the extension in its

more extreme form of the never-ending conflicts of capitalism" (p25). It follows that wars are an inevitable feature of the capitalist system. Truces are only temporary.

Already the swords are being sharpened for a future World War III, that is if we can believe the Kremlin's propaganda sheet, ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA (UK edition, distributed by the Daily Telegraph, 25 January 2007):
Mankind has already consumed most of its natural resources... In future, those who are in a position to control energy resources will totally determine world development... there is a scenario that the next world war - thermonuclear or not - will be for energy resources. This scenario is set around 2020 to 2025... Twenty years from now cities in the Russian north will begin to freeze. Meanwhile the country's oil will last only for 12-13 years... Around 80% of energy resources of the Islamic Arc [i.e. from the Middle East through the CAR countries to south-east Asia and the Pacific] are within Islamic countries. We can envisage the fight for energy resources as the fight with Islam, in other words it will be under the guise of "fight with terrorism."... World War III will be the fight for energy resources.

While China is already actively seeking oil and gas abroad, e.g. in Darfur, like the Kremlin the US is taking a long view and preparing for a "Long War", of similar duration to the Cold War. In Paul Rogers' book, INTO THE LONG WAR (Oxford Research Group, 2006), he argued that:

Given the increasing oil import dependence of the Chinese, a greater influence for the United States in Central Asia, especially the oil-rich Caspian Basin region, could well be of value in the future balance of power with China and Russia (p124)...

The United States may be guided by short-term political factors, but its military planners and their political masters have now embraced the idea of a long conflict, the Long War... there still lies the enduring importance of the Persian Gulf oil resources, with both the United States and China increasingly relying on the region which means that it would be entirely unacceptable for the United States to consider withdrawal from Iraq, no matter how insecure the environment (pp 135-6).

The Great War

Horrific as war is, wasteful as it is of human lives and potential as well as of resources, not to mention its 'carbon footprint' and pollution of the environment, there is another "long war", one which most people seem to disregard or find acceptable - perhaps because it is part of the very air we all breathe and so we are accustomed to it, as we are to polluted skies. That is the *class war*, a killer on a terrible scale.

There are worse things than war. The vast tragedy of the slow starvation in times of "glorious peace" of one-third of the population is not spectacular: it is sordid. The wholesale and ever-present stunting of the minds and bodies of the toiling millions, in order that wealth and leisure may be the lot of the few, does not provide striking headlines... in the unspeakable Press. These things are taboo, dangerous. But they exist, and in real horror, extent and importance, they transcend manifold all the suffering in even the war of the nations.

SOCIALIST STANDARD, February 1916

Only by ending capitalism and establishing Socialism - a cooperative worldwide system based on producing goods and services for use, rather than commodities produced and distributed for profit - is there any hope at all of ending international competition, the trade war which is at the root of all international conflicts, and many so-called civil wars as well.

Above all, Socialism would mean an end to that terrible tragedy of poverty, hunger, homelessness, preventable disease, and the economic insecurity which afflict so many of the world's workers.

This is why Socialists oppose those who, however well-meaning, merely protest against this or that war, or campaign against particular features of capitalism. *It is not enough just to protest.*

We need your uncompromising support in our work to help build a movement to end the worldwide system that causes wars, and which, generation after generation, perpetuates the class war, the war of exploitation waged by the haves against the have-nots. Our campaign, our "long war", is to end the capitalist system, to liberate the working class, and establish a new social system, based on worldwide cooperation, and the principle of "*from each according*

to their ability, to each according to their needs". Only this can ensure peace.

CAPITAL AND LABOUR

Such being the tendency of things in this system, is this saying that the working class ought to renounce their resistance against the encroachment of capital, and abandon their attempts at making the best of the occasional chances for their temporary improvement? If they did, they would be degraded to one level mass of broken wretches past salvation... At the same time, and quite apart from the general servitude involved in the wages system, the working class ought not to exaggerate to themselves the ultimate working of these every-day struggles. They ought not to forget that they are fighting with effects, but not with the causes of those effects; that they are retarding the downward movement, but not changing its direction; that they are applying palliatives, not curing the malady. They ought, therefore, not to be exclusively absorbed in these unavoidable guerrilla fights incessantly springing up from the ever-ceasing encroachments of capital or changes of the market. They ought to understand that, with all the miseries it imposes upon them, the present system simultaneously engenders the material conditions and the social forms necessary for an economical reconstruction of society. Instead of the conservative motto, "A fair day's wages for a fair day's work!" They ought to inscribe on their banner the revolutionary watchword: "Abolition of the wages system!"

Karl Marx, VALUE PRICE AND PROFIT, pp 92-93

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Marx's Revenge

Has Marx had the last laugh?

Has Marx had the last laugh? Academics and politicians continually line up to state that Marx is a "*dead dog*", that "*Communism*" has been tried and failed, yet the social problems caused by capitalism remain; economic theories come and go as regularly as trade depressions, exploitation and the class struggle continue unabated, and the world in which Marx studied and wrote CAPITAL is very much like our own.

A book which challenges the view that Marx is buried under the rubble of the Berlin Wall is MARX'S REVENGE: THE RESURGENCE OF CAPITALISM AND THE DEATH OF STATE SOCIALISM by Professor Meghnad Desai (Verso 2002).

Lord Desai, a Labour Peer, sets out to show that what constituted "*Marxism*" in the 20th century bore no resemblance to Marx's ideas. Desai believes Marx "*is the only serious attempt after Adam Smith to understand the dynamics of capitalism*" (Preface, page x).

Desai tries to show that Marx is a friend of globalisation and the free market. He fails.

Marx's revenge is a double-edged sword; a weapon against both those like Lenin and his followers who fraudulently constructed a totalitarian dictatorship in the name of "*Marx*", and those like the Austrian School of Economics, whose adherents included von Mises and Hayek, who believe that capitalism is the final destination in the social evolution of the human species.

Desai asks: "*What of Marx, then? Could his ideas come back?*" (p3). Socialists would reply that his ideas never went away because there was no '*socialist*' experiment in Russia to have been tried, tested and failed. Russian capitalism, after Lenin, developed along capitalist lines in accordance with Marx's theory of history, class exploitation and class struggle. Marx's ideas and critique of capitalism, are applicable wherever the capital-labour relationship holds, wherever the worker's mental and physical ability to work is sold as a commodity in exchange for a wage or salary.

Desai correctly points out that Marx did not advocate nationalisation of industries, or the replacement of the market by state planners. "*He did not look to the state even a 'socialist' state, to alleviate the conditions of the workers*" (p3). And Desai makes this valid point:

Marx was no friend of Capitalism, but he was its best student. He devoted more than half his sixty-five years to studying the dynamics of capitalism, but with a view to finding the forces that would finally bring about its end and its eventual replacement by communism. This was not, however, the replacement of the government of a capitalist state by a government which would bring about socialism. The idea that socialism would be brought about by the state was alien to everything he stood for (p4).

It was the working class by their own conscious and political actions who would establish Socialism. The working class would gain control of the powers of government, national and local, "...in order that this machinery... may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic" (OBJECT AND DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES, Clause 6, Socialist Party of Great Britain). In Socialism labour would be voluntary. There would be no wages system.

However, Marx, contrary to Desai's assertion, was no champion of Free Trade except that he saw it as a social force to sweep away feudalism. This is what Marx wrote rather than what Desai thought he wrote:

... generally speaking, the Protective system in these days is conservative, while the Free Trade system works destructively. It breaks up old nationalities and carries antagonism of proletariat and bourgeoisie to the uttermost point. In a word, the Free Trade system hastens the Social Revolution. In this revolutionary sense alone, gentlemen, I am in favour of Free Trade (On the Question of Free Trade in THE POVERTY OF PHILOSOPHY, p207).

Marx was not advocating free trade in its own right. In the 1840s he saw free trade as a force which would hasten the establishment of Socialism by intensifying the class struggle between the capitalist class and working class. But in Capital and his mature writings he underscored how capitalism was a "fetter" on the forces of production including labour

Profit and the Austrian School of Economics

Desai devotes some time in discussing the Austrian School; particularly von Mises, Hayek and Schumpeter because they spent their academic lives trying to show the impossibility of any alternative to capitalism, as they narrowly understood the term. If nothing else, the economists of this school actually read Marx (E Bohm-Bawerk's KARL MARX AND THE CLOSE OF HIS SYSTEM was flawed but at least the author, unlike Keynes and Harold Wilson, actually read all three volumes of CAPITAL), and saw his danger to the privilege and power of the capitalist class. Professor Weiss, another Austrian economist, warned his students that Ricardo led to Marx, like night followed day.

Joseph Schumpeter, in particular, has caught Desai's attention. For example, Schumpeter:

... had an alternative answer to that of Marx: profits came not from the exploitation of labour but from innovations, and it was the entrepreneur who launched innovations (Desai, op. cit., p176).

This was, of course, utter nonsense. No capitalist is to be found working in the research and development departments of companies or in the university departments of science and technology. Innovation is the by-product of the working class.

Take the important mathematics and scientific research papers coming out of the universities today, when was one written by a capitalist? To follow this absurd line of argument, it would follow that profit-making is purely "subjective" to be discovered by "entrepreneurs".

In fact, the capital which the capitalist uses for innovation, that is past profits or loans from banks, itself comes from past exploitation of the working class, what Marx called "dead labour".

Marx says: "Capital is dead labour which, vampire-like, lives only by sucking living labour, and lives the more, the more labour it sucks." This choice of metaphor is politically important because through it Marx aims to make an important point about capitalism. While it may be true that the substance of commodities and of money is dead labour, capital itself is an active social agent, the capitalist is "personified capital". Accumulated labour can exercise power over living labour because it refuses to stay dead and, like the vampire, returns to drain the living energy of the workers. The domination of capital over labour is nothing less than the rule of dead labour.

So what is Desai trying to prove about innovations? Marx does not ignore this: on the contrary, he emphasised the role of innovation and technology as a central feature of capital accumulation. Capital accumulation is inseparably linked to technological change; accumulation and innovation go hand-in-hand. Accumulation not only brings in new types of technology but it also brings in new methods of production and increasing division of labour.

However, it is important to distinguish between the motives of an individual capitalist like Bill Gates of Microsoft (Desai's example of an "*innovating entrepreneur*") and the capitalist class as a whole. An individual capitalist will attempt to increase productivity by substituting constant capital for labour power. He can then produce commodities with less labour-power embodied than his competitors. Since the value of a commodity is the social average, the innovating capitalist can grab an excess amount of surplus value until other capitalists are forced to innovate and the social value of the commodity is lowered. These points are elaborated by Marx in the third volume of CAPITAL in Chapters XV (*The Law of the Tendency of the Rate of Profit to Fall*) and XVII (Commercial Profit).

Bill Gates did not invent most of the innovations associated with Microsoft. He bought them or they were produced by his employees. Certainly his ruthlessness as a businessman gave him an advantage over his competitors. Again, this was something understood by Marx in the competitive struggle between capitalists. But "*being innovative*" still doesn't explain how Gates became the richest person in the world: this can only be explained from Marx's theory of surplus value.

It is pointless to assess the distribution of income under capitalism from some notion of fairness. There is no fairness under capitalism. "*Fair Trade*" is the empty rhetoric of priests and charity executives, while "*A Fair Day's work for a fair day's wage*" is merely a conservative slogan. When Marx used the labour theory of value, he did so because it explained capitalism and the origin of profit, not because it should "*allow labour to possess and enjoy the whole of its produce*".

Marx believed the discovery of surplus value was one of the most important aspects of his study of capitalism. It demonstrated not only exploitation and the class struggle but that the capitalist was totally irrelevant to production. Workers spend part of their time at work producing for themselves and their families. That is necessary labour time. But the rest of the time they are working for the employer. The value produced in the surplus labour time Marx called "*surplus value*".

And surplus value is the unearned income which goes to the capitalist class in the form of rent, interest and profit.

In his study of relative and absolute surplus value Marx went on to show that the capitalist class will never leave the working class alone; there will be no rest to the capitalists' exploitation of wage labour; not until the abolition of the wages system.

The misnamed "Socialist Economic Debate"

Desai also recounts the so-called "*Socialist Economic Debate*", formulated by Professor Mises, in which he contrasted the price information available to a purely market economy without any government interference and a state capitalist economy in which there was one administrator planning all commodity production and distribution was decided from the centre (COLLECTIVE ECONOMIC PLANNING: CRITICAL STUDIES ON THE POSSIBILITIES OF SOCIALISM, ed. Hayek, 1935).

The economists who took part in this 'debate', like F M. Taylor (THE GUIDANCE OF PRODUCTION IN A SOCIALIST STATE [sic], American Economic Review, March 1929), and Oscar Lange (essay in ECONOMIC THEORY OF SOCIALISM, ed B E. Lippincott, 1938), refused to use Marxian analysis, particularly Marx's theory of value, to study Russia as a capitalist country. Meanwhile, others on the Left continually referred to the state capitalism in the USSR as "*actually existing Socialism*", in much the same way as Desai ignorantly refers to it as "*State Socialism*". "*State Socialism*" is a contradiction in terms. Socialism will be a stateless society of free men and women without coercion. This was Marx's view, and one shared by the Socialist Party of Great Britain who Lord Desai conveniently ignores, particularly the SPGB's analysis of the development of capitalism in Lenin's Russia.

The so-called "*Socialist Economic Debate*" has nothing to do with the Socialism advocated by Marx and the SPGB; it was a debate over two different forms of capitalism. Nevertheless, to accept the terms of debate as set out by von Mises and Hayek, you are drawn into their own peculiar perspective of what constitutes 'capitalism'. To attack the formulation of the argument posed by von Mises and Hayek is to attack their conception of economic life as made up of isolated individuals with a natural propensity to "*truck, barter and trade*".

The focus of these economists' attention conveniently shifts from labour and production to consumption, the complete opposite to Marx's method of enquiry set out in the first page of CAPITAL. Social and co-operative labour is also conveniently ignored by them. However, if you resist the assumptions of isolated individuals and concentrate on social co-operative labour, their criticism of any planned alternative to the market lacks coherence. As Bertrand Russell once remarked, if you do not go to the chess board then you cannot be checked.

Production, distribution and consumption are social actions; we do not live in a Robinson Crusoe world of isolated individuals. There is no "*universal scarcity*", scarcity exists under capitalism because profit, not meeting human needs, dictates production.

The categories of economics are not eternal (*spontaneous market order*) or theological (*perfect knowledge and absolute desires*) while economics itself is historically specific to the study of commodity production and exchange for profit.

As for production and distribution in a Socialist Society, Marx and Socialists following Marx are not obliged to construct recipes, models or programmes for the future.

The forces of production, including labour power, will be freed by Socialism from the constraints of the relations of production under capitalism. Free labour will have the techniques to produce according to human needs within a framework of common ownership and democratic control.

How a socialist society will plan production will be for them to decide under the prevailing conditions at the time but it will not be through the dictates of a central planner, any more than it will be though the tyranny of the market.

Marx's Understanding of Capitalism.

Marx contributed a great deal to the understanding of capitalism, largely contained in his three volumes of CAPITAL. His labour theory of value gave a valid account of productivity. His theory of surplus value showed how class exploitation takes place leading to class struggle. His theories on capital accumulation, the industrial reserve army of the unemployed, the Genesis of the industrial capitalist, and the centralisation and concentration of capital are remarkable pieces of work. Marx gave an impressive account of the trade cycle, he understood the correct cause of inflation, and he demonstrated beyond a shadow of a doubt that capitalism could never be run in the interest of the working class.

What Desai does not understand is Marx's method. He believes that Marx's numerical scheme found in Volume II of CAPITAL, for example, showed the possibility of a crisis-free capitalism "*crisis-free and stable growth in perpetuity*" (Desai, op cit, p93). This was not the case, although Desai is not the first person to make this mistake. The chapters on Simple and Extended Reproduction were designed by Marx to analyse the circulation process, predicated on the process of production analysed in the first volume of CAPITAL. It was only in the third volume of CAPITAL that he discussed production and circulation in a holistic way.

For someone who claims to have studied CAPITAL, it is surprising that Desai missed the following remarks by Marx on simple and extended production:

The fact that the production of commodities is the general form of capitalist production implies the role which money is playing in it not only as a medium of circulation, but also as money-capital, and engenders certain conditions of normal exchange peculiar to this mode of production and therefore of the normal course of reproduction, whether it be on a simple or on an extended scale -conditions which change into so many conditions of abnormal movement,

into so many possibilities of crises, since a balance is itself an accident owing to the spontaneous nature of this production... This process is so complicated that it offers ever so many occasions for running abnormally...

CAPITAL VOLUME II, Ch. XXI, p495

So much for Marx proposing a crisis free capitalism! In fact the main question that Marx is attempting to answer is the following:

How is it possible that every capitalist draws a surplus-value in money out of the annual product, i.e., draws more money out of circulation than he throws into it, since in the long run the capitalist class must be regarded as the source of all money thrown into circulation?

CAPITAL VOLUME II, Ch. XX, p473 (Penguin ed.)

Marx's answer was to show that, in a capitalist economy, capitalists create surplus value in the production process, and then realise it in the process of circulation through the means of money acting as a medium of exchange. The creation and realisation of surplus value has been hidden by the process of circulation.

Desai correctly points out that there is no "*collapse theory of capitalism*" to be found in the third volume of CAPITAL where Marx rejects an "*iron law*" for the falling rate of profit, in favour of a "*tendency*" mitigated by countervailing forces.

Desai cannot see the Socialism of the early Marx in his later writings. That is because he does not look for them. The Fetishism of Commodities section (CAPITAL vol. I chapter 1) continues Marx's earlier work on alienation and, in a footnote to the historical tendency of capitalist accumulation, he recalls in the very last paragraph the following quotation from THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO:

The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the labourers, due to competition, by their revolutionary combination, due to association. The development of modern industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet, the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie, therefore produces, above all, are its own grave diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable...

Of all the classes, that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie to-day, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class. The other classes perish and disappear in the face of modern industry, the proletariat is its special and essential product...

Marx: Astronomer or Astrologer?

Finally, Desai shows, from the mature writings of Marx, that he gave no time-table for the establishment of Socialism. Marx was not a "*prophet*" and CAPITAL was not a "*Bible*" or, to quote Desai, "*Marx was an astronomer of history, not an astrologer*" (p10).

Marx was a social scientist, analysing the forces acting on capitalist production and the way in which class exploitation affected the class struggle. Marx's principal aim, set out in the *Preface* of CAPITAL, was "*to lay bare the economic law of motion of modern society*".

How could Marx prophesy the exact time for the establishment of Socialism when he stressed, time and time again, that the establishment of Socialism was the work of a class-conscious and politically organised, socialist, working class? It was Marx's greatest achievement to have given a scientific account of capitalism and the class struggle.

It is to his credit that he showed the inherently alienating and exploitative nature of commodity production, and exchange for profit. It was sheer genius to have demonstrated that under capitalism labour-power is a commodity, and that the working class could only ever be free by freeing themselves from the tyranny of capital, that is, by abolishing commodity and market relations.

Lord Desai asks the question "*Will there be Socialism beyond capitalism?*" (p315). To pose the question is to admit that Socialism has never existed. The answer to the question lies, where Marx located it, with the world's working class, not with economists and political leaders.

To the military mind (if that's not a contradiction in terms), a soldier's death in war, if not down to disease or accident, is either caused by enemy action or by so-called "*friendly fire*". To the Socialist, this phrase indicates very confused and muddled thinking.

Since it is unlikely that any of the capitalist class are actually doing any fighting, although this is done on their behalf and in *their* interests, it follows that, not only are victims of warfare fellow members of the working class, but that *all* of those fighting are also themselves members of the same class. In short, brothers fighting brothers. "*Friendly fire*" is a stupid phrase. Instead we should describe all those killed in war, soldiers and civilians alike, as what they are: victims of *fratricidal fire*.

Workers are all alike exploited under capitalism: we have no interest in slaughtering one another in the interests of various gangs of the capitalist class, whatever the propaganda and the pretexts. Instead, we all have an urgent interest in organising to end this system.

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Petards Piffle Pulverised

We have to hand a ten-page document written by one Paul Petard, which purports to be "*a libertarian socialist critique of the politics of the SPGB*". Petard sets himself the impossible task of debunking the case for Socialism. He inevitably fails miserably.

Most of his vacuous verbiage is devoted to attacking his own misconceptions about what constitutes a member of the working class. He describes himself as a "*ranter*", and directs his ranting against the Clapham-based Socialist Party which he accuses of having a membership only vaguely concerned with the Declaration of Principles, and of straying in various directions from the case for Socialism. These accusations against *that* Party are quite valid but Petard dishonestly uses this to avoid dealing with the position from which they have strayed.

The Socialist Party of Great Britain which holds to the founding position of 1904 including THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES, publishes The SPGB (www.socialiststudies.org.uk) as its official journal. Petard is blissfully only vaguely aware of this. Yet it is *this* case which he sets himself to answer.

It is worth responding to Petard's fallacies as they are commonly held by the apologists of capitalism. But, before dealing with what he does say, it is necessary to draw attention to some of the things he ignores.

He shows no recognition of the world-wide effects of capitalism. Militarism, war and poverty are nowhere mentioned. These phenomena directly follow from the dominant, owning position of the capitalist class. The extremes of wealth are to be seen in a few hundred billionaires or multi-millionaires featured in the SUNDAY TIMES RICH LIST, and the five million people dying each year for want of clean drinking water. The poverty of 20 million unemployed in Europe and nine million in America, and the suffering all this represents, has never filtered through to the muddled mind of Petard, whose main preoccupation is to pigeon-hole everybody into some "*group*" or other in order to deny that the working class as such exists.

Since he does not understand the class-ownership of the means of production and the workings of capitalism, he is naturally unable to grasp, that Socialism, a classless society, must replace this system. If he were forced to admit that workers have common interests and nothing for which to kill each other in capitalist wars, Petard might be driven to agreeing that the position stated in The Socialist Party of Great Britain's DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES is the correct one. That really would give him insomnia.

Petard struggles from the start to find anything to attack in the case for Socialism, so in common with many others he ridicules the time taken for Socialism to be embraced by the working class. "...*has a full century and a bit of making*

socialist propaganda been of much use to the world?" And "They are 'impossibilists' who have been stuck in an historic time warp since 1904". You can hear such ignorant drivel in Hyde Park any Sunday from people who like Petard neither understand capitalism nor have any answer to the worldwide outrages it generates.

It has never been the case of the SPGB that Socialist propaganda, by and of itself will be what changes the world. A simple glance at our Declaration of Principles would reveal this, if Petard can understand plain English. CLAUSE 5 states: "*That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself*".

While workers are deluded into supporting capitalism and continue to vote its agents into power, the system will remain. Socialist propaganda is only valid because it accurately portrays the nature of the conflicts and contradictions of capitalism. Only when a democratic majority of the world's workers see society in these terms, will they organise consciously and use their votes for Socialism. While a minority, all that Socialists can do is advocate the answer.

Petard directs his shallow observations at the Clapham-based Socialist Party. If he knows the views of a "*significant number*" of the Party, as he claims, he should know that those Socialists who stand by the 1904 founding position, who were expelled in 1991, reconstituted The Socialist Party of Great Britain on the basis of the original Declaration of Principles and the single revolutionary Object. The Clapham based Socialist Party had changed the Party's name, and its members held a variety of non-socialist ideas.

Petard should know that Socialists do not "*believe*" anything. The case for Socialism rests on historical facts and evidence. It is not possible to "*believe*" or subscribe to "*half of what the SPGB claims to stand for in their Object and Declaration of Principles...*" (p2). THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES is a logical sequence of eight clauses which follow from the fact that the capitalist class own society's means of production.

Petard refers to a world of "...socialised production for need not profit without money or wage-labour" as "utopian". He has probably never heard of Frederick Engels's book SOCIALISM: UTOPIAN AND SCIENTIFIC, where Engels explains Historical Materialism, making it clear that, while Socialist aspirations prior to the development of capitalism were utopian, modern industry, trade and navigation make the world, in effect, one economic unit, laying the foundation for abundance without classes, buying or selling, and markets.

Petard lists three claims made by the Party:

1. Socialism has long been an idea but nowhere in practice.
2. When it is established it must be globally.
3. World Socialism can only be achieved democratically

He then reveals his ignorance by asserting that no. 1 "... is a denial of Socialism, as an actual material historical tendency..." and "Socialism has long been a partially attempted practice giving rise to and making use of a collection of ideas".

This is classical utopianism. Socialism means a world where the means of production and distribution, the entire Earth's resources, will be commonly-owned by all mankind. And production will be solely to meet human needs. No "partial" practice is possible. Until Socialism is established, class society, money, wages and exploitation, i.e., capitalism will continue.

Petard's comments on item no. 2 continue to be asinine. He claims the establishment of Socialism "... implies a sort of managerial exercise... a formal suspension of history or all histories... by who? And how?".

He claims again that "... specific socialistic outlooks will begin at certain times in certain situations" (pp 2-3). He cannot conceive of "the whole world altogether consciously going for Socialism".

If he had ever read Marx, he would see exactly that:

The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Working men of all countries unite!

This was the great concluding appeal of THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO, published nearly 160 years ago.

The underlying deficiency running through Petard's arguments, apart from his having no understanding of Socialism, is that he cannot conceive of a majority of workers coming to understand the need for Socialism and acting consciously and politically together. How else could he ask: "...by who? And how?" There will be no "suspension" of history, merely a revolutionary change from obsolete capitalism to a higher form of society, Socialism.

Because he lacks the knowledge to be part of the process explaining Socialism. Petard sees "...various real struggles" (p.3) going on, without understanding that the day-to-day conflicts between the working class and the capitalist class arise from the exclusion of the workers from ownership of the means of production. This above all, is what will be resolved by Socialism.

He goes on to make the absurd assertion that:

... there isn't actually one big unified totalised so-called "capitalism". There isn't actually one big immediately unified strictly coherent social capital completely subsuming and dominating everything everywhere all the time....

This is gobbledegook for the fact is that capitalism is heterogeneous and competitive. What capital does is to exploit wage-labour everywhere and all the time. Nobody has claimed that capital is "*unified*". Capitalism, for all the variations in its development, is the world dominating system, and at any given time there is a total capital.

Capitalism, as Marx and Engels saw it in the middle of the 19th century, had "*created a world in its own image*" (COMMUNIST MANIFESTO). Its quest for ever greater markets chases it to every surface of the globe. Commodity production, monetary class relations and the profit motive are its universal *modus operandi*.

Petard's next "*revelation*" is that there is not:

... one big immediately unified and strictly coherent working class, or perfectly formed "proletariat", that can get to grips with this supposed "Capitalism" with one big hand and overthrow it in one big act (p3).

The working class is defined by the relations in which they stand to the means of production, that is, as non-owning employees -a class of wage workers. In the advanced dominant capitalist countries, they are the majority and share a common interest in ending their servitude. This is also the pattern that developing countries follow so, as Socialist ideas take hold, it will be on a world scale. We have already dealt with the "*overthrown*" issue.

Petard has persuaded us that he has looked through the index of Volume 1 of Marx's CAPITAL (there is no evidence that he went any further) and, finding the word "*capitalism*" does not appear, despite eleven headings on capitalist industry, capitalist accumulation and capitalist production, etc; in a book of 848 pages which minutely analyses every aspect of bourgeois society (another expression Marx uses), we are expected to infer that Volume 1 of CAPITAL does not deal with capitalism. The title of the volume shows the absurdity of his jibe, it is "*CAPITAL I. CAPITALISTIC PRODUCTION*".

Petard then reveals his anarcho-syndicalist confusion with a lengthy attack on what he mistakenly thinks is democracy. He regards the political acceptance of majority decisions over a minority as despotic and tyrannical, but sees the spontaneous action of minorities as solidarity. He cannot think beyond democracy as "*a system of rule*" (p4) in which strikes, as a form of industrial action by part of a class of employees against part of a class of employers, would not exist.

His ignorance extends to not understanding that "*rule*", the government of one class over another, exists because of capitalism, where the vast majority of the working class accept their subject position in society and vote for parties which represent the owning (ruling) class.

Spontaneous minority action over a far greater period than 100 years has made no difference to this.

Pouring scorn on the Parliamentary strategy of Socialists and claiming it "*involves elitism*" and being contemptuous of the "*bourgeois electoral circuses*", does not, as he imagines, set him free from the "*national state's constitution*" or from "...*deference to and recognition of the national institutions, the national parliament and the national borders, etc*"(p4).

Do anarchists like Petard have a passport? Does he use money? Thus respecting private property and national institutions. How does he stay out of prison if he does not recognise the laws that Parliament - the bourgeois electoral circus - passes? Does he drive on the wrong side of the road? (Quite likely).

Political power is very real; it resides in the seat of Government and centres on Parliament. It includes the coercive-state powers of the police, the prisons and the armed forces.

It will continue to represent the dominance of the capitalist class for as long as the workers are deluded to vote for their masters' ideas represented by reformist parties. What is certain is that the capitalist class cannot be stripped of their ownership of the means of wealth production without political power being taken out of their hands. This is why Socialists (the SPGB) urge an understanding of Socialism upon our fellow workers, so that a democratically elected majority of Socialist delegates will represent the demand to end capitalism by making the means of production communal.

The rule of one class over another will end when classes themselves disappear and people, as social equals, democratically administer production solely for use.

Petard falls back on the old "*impossibilist*" tag that was used to identify The Socialist Party of Great Britain's revolutionary position against that of the reformists. He uses it in an effort to be contemptuous. We welcome the appellation, man has always been impossibilist. Man harnesses the forces of nature to his needs. He cultivates food and generates power. He flies at hundreds of miles per hour and sends complex scientific instruments to make detailed investigations of the planets. If man has only attempted what was possible, he would still be in the cave-age.

Here, a few extracts from Marx and Engels (THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO) would be appropriate:

1. The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie.
2. The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world-market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country.
3. But not only has the bourgeoisie forged the weapons that bring death to itself; it has also called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons - the modern working class -the proletarians.
4. But every class struggle is a political struggle.
5. We have seen above, that the first step in the revolution by the working class, is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to win the battle for democracy.
6. In place of the old bourgeois society with its classes and class antagonisms we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all.

Like Marx and Engels, The Socialist Party of Great Britain engages in spreading Socialist understanding. Petard regards education as "*preaching*" and "*elitist*", "*detached*" and "*patronising*". He believes there are already millions of workers and millions more "*of other classes*" who are "*consciously aware in the back of their minds...*" (pp 4&5). Rather like the man who left his "*liversalts*" in his back pocket?

He should have gone on to explain why these millions "*around the world*" continue to vote for capitalist parties, wave their masters' national flags, and slaughter each other in capitalist wars.

He exposes his own shoddy reading by claiming that our DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES is about "*seizing state power*". He then quotes the whole of Clause 6 which says something quite different, and also, ignorantly, attributes his own "*seizing state power*" to Marx.

In his next paragraph, he elaborates a fantasy world to show the state represents interests other than those of the capitalists. He says (p5) that, even if leaders who claim to represent the working class and are themselves from the working class background manage to gain power in government, they themselves become elitists, bureaucrats and state capitalists.

This has absolutely no bearing on the case of the SPGB which he pretends to be answering. Our case has always been

one of the rejection of leaders on the grounds that a majority of workers must themselves understand and vote for Socialism to bring it about. There can be no elitist separation between conscious workers and their own instrument, the Party.

Petard concludes with yet another absurdity:

From a genuine socialist point of view it [the state] needs to be disbanded and abolished, not taken over or "converted" which is a reformist policy. So here another element of reformism in the politics of the SPGB is exposed (p5).

No hint of how the state can be "*disbanded*", without first being taken over.

"Converted", as used in our DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES, clearly means that, once captured by the votes of a democratic, class conscious majority, using a Socialist political party, the state will no longer be an instrument of class rule oppressing the workers. In their hands, it will be used to make the means of production the common property of all society.

"... The emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex" (CLAUSE 4)

Government over people will give way to the administration of production by and for the whole people.

Petard's last 3-and-a-half pages are a desperate attempt to identify the working class or, to be more precise, to avoid identifying the working class. He never manages to pin it down but **it is the position people occupy in relation to the means of production that determines their class position.**

For example, all those millions of Indian workers in Mumbai who commute in over-crowded trains each week to run India's financial centres are employees. They do not own the finance businesses, or the huge buildings in which these are conducted. They have this in common with millions of commuters in London and cities around the world. Whether they travel to work in offices, mines and factories, farms or transport systems, or teach in schools and whether they wear suits (or skirts and blouses) or overalls, makes no difference to their position as employees.

Petard sees a host of conditions and categories, which in his mind, have the effect of denying working class status. These include some peasants with small holdings on which significant amount of food might be grown. What happens to wages when workers have other means of access to food? Wages would tend to be correspondingly lower.

In general, as formerly feudal countries are drawn into the capitalist orbit, there are always hang-over situations. Marx, however, makes the point that undeveloped countries see in the developed ones, the conditions of their own future. It is not as though the workers in the advanced industrial countries are on the verge of establishing Socialism.

In little more than fifty years, China, for example, has become a major capitalist world power. As capitalism becomes ever more predominant *"society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: bourgeoisie and proletariat"* (THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO, 1848). Petard has much catching up to do!

He should bone-up on the Labour Theory of Value. The price for which workers (world-wide) sell their labour-power as employees represents on average the full cost of its reproduction. The trick is, as Marx demonstrated, that in the labour-process (the production of commodities), they as a class produce a mass of wealth far in excess of their wages. It is this surplus-value from which rent, interest and profit, the wealth of the capitalist class, accrues.

Petard sees the class-struggle as an unending series of wild-cat strikes; he fails to grasp the fact that the final class struggle in history is about taking the means of production away from a minority parasite class and making them common-property.

It is unnecessary to explore all of Petard's blind-alleys, they lead nowhere. The Socialist Party of Great Britain has never claimed that every person on Earth can be neatly pigeon-holed into a class category, or that anyone who is not a capitalist, is a member of the working class. This is an invention of one who knows no better.

He fails to understand the function of the so-called welfare-state in the economic cycle of capitalism is keeping workers who are sacked in a recession in working order ready to be exploited again as trade recovers. He even swallows the common delusion that a salary is different from a wage. Whether figured in hourly or monthly terms, they are the price of labour-power. He thinks a "*salary*" confers a "*professional status*" upon an employee and lifts him out of the working class.

Again Marx would reply:

The bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honoured and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage-labourers.

THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO

Unfortunately for Petard, many of those workers he regards as "...protected professional elites such as the top medics / school-heads / middle and upper civil servants / lawyers and judges / top academics and scientists etc..." (p8) have in recent years been in disputes over pay. College and University lecturers actually went on strike for higher wages, and even went so far as to march and demonstrate. A million national and local government workers have either been on strike or threatened strike action. Doctors have fought to defend payment levels for treatments. Nurses leave the profession in droves against poor pay, and scientists fight the wages struggle by moving abroad for better-paid jobs.

Petard's attempts to divide the working-class along income and professional lines are ironically similar to those of the capitalist media: the last thing they would want is a united working class that recognises a common interest.

He deals at length with the police to show their special "*protected status*" failing to see that in the insecure world of violence, crime and terror which is modern capitalism, private property has to be protected,. Nine tenths of accumulated wealth belongs to the capitalist class. So for them to spend money on a few "*privileges*" to buy loyalty as well as labour-power is only to be expected. It is, however, a fact reported by the Halifax Building Society that the police, together with nurses, teachers, fire-fighters and ambulance workers, can no longer afford an average-priced house in 65% of towns in England. This compares with 24% of towns just five years ago (TELETEXT, 29 July 2006).

So the police's position as workers is a worsening one. The proof of their being members of the working class is demonstrated by the fact that those who leave the force must seek another job for wages, on the labour market.

Finally, just who Petard is remains unclear, since he refers to "*us*" and "*we*" here and there, and uses supportive remarks in favour of the so-called Revolutionary Communist Group and the alleged libertarian socialists. He pours scorn on debating while producing ten tight pages of highly debateable arguments.

In common with many of our opponents, he is unlikely to agree to debate with The Socialist Party of Great Britain.

With a name like Petard, he should not be turned loose on society with such a blunt instrument, he could hurt himself.

[NOTE: This is a reply to an article written by Petard entitled "The Socialist Substandard: 100 years of the socialist party of 1904. A libertarian socialist critique of the politics of the SPGB." The article is too long for publication in The SPGB but can be read at [www.libcom.org/library/spgb-p\(aul\)-petard](http://www.libcom.org/library/spgb-p(aul)-petard). The author has been sent our reply with a challenge to debate.]

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Science, Religion and Socialism

Do we live in an irrational age? Could well be, and one which seems to turn its back on science, if by science is meant a serious, systematic study of the workings of the universe, ourselves included. In recent months, many pages of the popular journal NEW SCIENTIST have been given over to articles on Creationism, a.k.a. 'intelligent design'. But when scientists confront those who are determined to force-feed the young in school science classes with religious

fables and fictions, this debate is portrayed typically as between the religious versus the "atheists", as in the NS report of a conference in La Jolla, California (In Place of God, NEW SCIENTIST, 18 Nov 2006).

That is a false antithesis: the debate for scientists - and those who value science, its methods and its potential - should not be a superficial one where deists and other believers in the supernatural / occult are opposed only by those whose argument goes no further than merely to deny the existence of a god, and whose atheism is seen as just another form of belief.

The scientific view should surely be that of a materialist monist. By this is meant that the universe / cosmos is material, that the mind is a function of the brain, and that, no matter how ingeniously the experiment is contrived, there is no way that anyone can ever measure, weigh or otherwise prove the reality of the supposedly immortal '*soul / spirit*', any more than any credible scientific evidence has been or ever could be found to support the ancient superstitious belief in a life-after-death.

What is too often forgotten is where the burden of proof lies. It is not for us to disprove the existence of god(s), but for the believers, creationists and so on to prove *their* case. Such believers assert the existence of gods and the supernatural but will always be unable to prove their case so, in the end, theirs is a position which falls back on subjective faith. The 'creationist geologist', John Baumgardner (NEW SCIENTIST, 9 December 2006), clearly has a long way to go before he understands how geology destroys the credibility of the creation myths in the Bible.

Creation Myths

Even back in the Renaissance, Leonardo da Vinci questioned the Flood fable, having found fossils of sea-creatures high up in the Alps: according to his calculations, even forty days and nights of rainfall simply could not have caused that much flooding. Yet now, in our own time, visitors to the Grand Canyon are still being urged to buy a book that asserts that this was "*formed a few thousand years ago by Noah's flood, and not a few million years ago by geological forces*" (NEW SCIENTIST, 13 January 2007).

What can any scientist make of the assertions (GENESIS 1, vv 14-16) of the creation of the sun and moon as "*two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night*"? Any teacher who tried to teach that the moon is, like the sun, a star or "*great light*" rather than a planet, would be misleading their pupils. Yet Wahhabi clerics in Saudi Arabia were still insisting that the earth was flat until a Saudi prince, who had personally experienced space travel in the space-shuttle *Discovery*, explained to a leading cleric in 1985 that this was actually not the case (Craig Unger, HOUSE OF BUSH, HOUSE OF SAUD, 2004, p85).

There are two main claims on behalf of religion. One is that it helps us to make sense of the nature of the world and our place in it. The other is that it is only from religion that we get our sense of morality and ethics, and this was Tony Benn's main argument in a recent TV discussion with the "*arch-atheist*", the scientist Richard Dawkins. Neither claim can be sustained for a moment.

Science or Dogma?

Clearly religion is worse than useless as a means or method of study. The understanding of the universe we can derive from sciences is logical - based upon reason and conclusions drawn from observable facts and quantifiable data, not subjective faith and blind, superstitious, traditional belief. Scientific theories and findings can be tested, checked, re-assessed, and, importantly, discarded as new research techniques and new sources of data become available. Those who rely on science follow where the evidence leads and, however complete and 'final' their theories may seem to be, they know that there is always more to discover; and that later researchers, accessing and studying new data, will shed fresh light on these discoveries, and so new theories will have to be developed. Indeed, in the last few decades, whole new scientific disciplines have been born and are rapidly being developed.

The scientific endeavour is a dynamic one, forever advancing beyond what was previously possible. In this sense it is evolutionary, not static but forever seeking to develop by exploring the interrelationships between

different elements and forces, as for instance in that most famous equation, E =mc2.

As a Socialist wrote:

Each scientist is, and must be, an evolutionist in his own field of research, and is, therefore, to that extent, a materialist. It is only when he leaves his field, particularly when he looks at society and religion, that he is likely to abandon science and enter the realms of fantasy...

... Evolution does not merely signify that there is perpetual change, but that the changes are an unfolding and further development of forces within that which is changing...

Everything is part of an unending world process, no section of which can be isolated except in thought. And even when isolating anything in thought it must still be studied in connection with other things. SPGB pamphlet,

HISTORICAL MATERIALISM, 1975, pp 41-42

By contrast, religions - particularly those dogmas based on supposedly 'sacred' texts, the Bible, the Koran etc, which are claimed to be the "*word of God*" and therefore true for all time, never to be challenged or questioned - are static, stuck in a time-warp. It is impossible now to accept the flat-earth view given in Genesis, while relatively recent researches into DNA, including mitochondrial DNA, have proved our close kinship with other primates (chimps and bonobos especially). Evolution rests on more solid foundations now than it did in Darwin's time.

But the Bible and other 'holy' books rely on miracles and other impossible happenings such as the Virgin Birth, life after death, angels and archangels, Satan and Hell. But any youngster at school who questions any of this is fobbed off with non-answers ("*God moves in a mysterious way*") or else told that it all comes down to 'faith'. It is partly because religions mostly discourage critical questioning that they are unable to come to terms with sciences such as geology and evolution, i.e. especially those sciences which show the universe as not static or isolated but as "*part of an unending world process*".

The Creationists' argument that life is as it is because of a supposed "*Intelligent Design*" simply cannot be squared with the facts. If you doubt this, take a look at an MRA scan of the neck: no halfway 'intelligent' designer could possibly have designed the nervous system to be so tangled up with the spinal column in such a stupid bottleneck. A bit of arthritis at this spot, and victims can rapidly become crippled, losing their balance and ability to walk. Then again, we know of many long-since extinct species that have existed on this planet, e.g. trilobites, dinosaurs, mammoths, and early primates, ancestors and relatives of our own species. But if such early life-forms were part of the original grand '*design*', one has to ask *why*. Why create species that were doomed to die out?

To seek to understand the universe and our place in it, we do need to start by recognising that everything is interrelated and interacting, hence forever changing. This understanding is what has helped develop our understanding of genetics, likewise of plate tectonics, continental drift, astronomy, ecology and many other fields of scientific discovery. In a time when the genomes of humans and other species are being mapped in detail, when DNA analysis enables us to discover so much about humankind's past migrations and kinships, and with the realisation that we are teetering on the brink of yet more amazing discoveries, it would be craziness of a high order for schools to teach, in science classes, creationist superstition and obsolete flat-earth ideas.

After all, we would not expect science teachers to teach alchemy, or medical schools to teach faith-healing.

Social Morality

What then of the claim made that religion serves a useful purpose by providing us with a sense of morality? To argue this is grossly insulting to the many - very moral - people, past and present, who either never took up religion or else consciously rejected it. Moreover, it is not hard to find teachings and stories in the Bible which are very far from moral. The Old Testament tells how God told Abraham to take his son up a mountain and kill him, as proof of his obedience. The same all-powerful God organised some very nasty experiences for those he got angry with.

As a recent letter to TELETEXT noted (8 February 2007):

It has been suggested that slavery should be one of the new school topics. I hope that some nice examples from the Bible will be used. Leviticus 25: 44-46, choosing foreign slaves. Exodus 21: 7-11, a man can sell his daughter as a

slave. Exodus 21: 20-21, also Luke 12: 47-48, about punishing slaves but not severely enough to kill them...

The New Testament is no better. Jesus is reported to have said: "*I come not to bring peace but a sword*" - not very different to the Old Testament teaching of "*an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth*".

But when we learn from science, we come to have an awareness that our nearest primate relatives, especially gorillas and bonobos, have a strong sense of how *cooperative* social behaviour and interactions help the individual as a member of a social group.

Those who hold that religious teaching is the source of human morality are ignoring the fact that humans have evolved as a *social* species, just as other primates did, a point that is argued by Dutch primatologist, Francis de Waal: *It is not hard to recognise the two pillars of human morality in the behaviour of other animals. These pillars are... summed up in the golden rule that transcends the world's cultures and religions. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." This unites empathy (attention to another's feelings) with reciprocity (if others follow the same rule, you too will be treated well). Human morality as we know it is unthinkable without empathy and reciprocity... ... Humans enforce social norms that dictate how we treat others and promote communal interests, but at morality's core we find an ancient primate psychology. The animal roots of human morality*, NEW SCIENTIST, 14 October 2006

In de Waal's recent book, PRIMATES AND PHILOSOPHERS: HOW MORALITY EVOLVED (Princeton, 2006), he argues against what he calls 'Veneer Theory', the old Aunt Sally caricature of Darwinism, the "*dog-eat-dog*" view which sees "*human morality as a thin crust on a churning urn of boiling funk*" (review in THE SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN, December 2006).

The very basis of our existence as a social species depends on our ability to co-operate with one another. It was from this social co-operation that our early ancestors developed language, that essential ability which has enabled us to progress by means of cultural evolution, able to hand on to the next generation whatever new discoveries and inventions are developed in our lifetime. The social aspect of our behaviour means that those who claim we need a supernatural deity to tell us what's right and wrong, and punish us if we go wrong, are utterly mistaken.

It is our evolved social 'human nature' itself which is the root of our social morality. Cooperation is very far from being "against human nature": on the contrary, without social cooperation we could not be human.

As Socialists would argue:

Mind, or the collection of thoughts, is a social product. Without society there is no mind. There is no such thing as a physical, a biological, or a non-social mind. The ideas, or the thoughts, of any given epoch are determined in general by the social conditions of that epoch, which also includes relics of past ideas. As these conditions change so do the ideas, over a longer or shorter time. That is why moral outlooks have undergone such fundamental changes over the centuries.

SPGB, HISTORICAL MATERIALISM, 1975, p16

That human codes of morality do change, as society changes, is obvious. Take, for instance, the view that chattel slavery is so utterly abhorrent that Tony Blair found himself saying "sorry" for the slave trade. Yet, until the 19th century, many defended the institution of slavery, basing their arguments on selected passages in the Bible. Likewise, in the 20th century, South Africa's racist apartheid regime was held by its supporters to be backed by Scripture.

Codes of morality are created by humans in response to given historic social conditions and relationships, and are generally supposed to serve a useful, cohesive, social function.

However, in today's warlike, competitive world, religion serves an anti-social function. Like other ideologies - 'democracy', nationalism and racism -, religions are used to mobilise groups of workers against each other, leading them to fight one another in the interest of their masters and exploiters.

Atrocities are committed and justified by the claim that this is a "*just war*", backed by religion. Paul Lafargue commented, in the 19th century, in terms which seem even more appropriate now than when he was writing, that:

The social function of exploiter of labour requires the capitalist to propagate the Christian religion, preaching humility and submission to God, who chooses the masters and sets off the servants, and to complete the teachings of Christianity by the eternal principles of democracy. It is quite to his interest that the wage-workers exhaust their brain power in controversies on the truths of religion and in discussions on Justice, Liberty, Ethics, Patriotism and other such booby-traps, in order that they may not have a minute left to reflect on their wretched condition and the means for improving it.

THE EVOLUTION OF PROPERTY AND SOCIAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL STUDIES, New Park Edition, p131

Religion as a crutch?

Importantly, religion also has another undesirable, antisocial function: it serves as a crutch, helping to make the unbearable tolerable. For many workers, that belief in "*pie in the sky when I die*" is apparently sufficient. As Francisco Ayala (biologist and philosopher, University of California), wrote:

Religion allows billions of people to live a life that makes sense - they can put up with the difficulties of life, hunger and disease. I don't want to take that away from them.

NEW SCIENTIST, 18 November 2006

That we live in an age when "*hunger and disease*" are still rampant is an indication that much needs to be changed. These are, in the main, problems of poverty, caused by the inequalities of world capitalism. Religion would have us acquiesce in such evils - to "*put up with*" them, accepting life in slums and poverty as "*God's Will*". Unfortunately, too many workers are still stuck in the dark ages, down on their bended knees, praying for miracles to happen.

Socialists, and probably most scientists, know that much can and should be done to create a better society, and to rid the world of poverty, hunger, disease and war. It is escapist delusion and sheer make-believe to suppose that the 'Almighty' will do something for us about social conditions of our own making.

Religions justify and legitimate social evils, and hence are complicit accomplices in the class exploitation, crimes, greed, corruption, cut-throat competition, violence, and endless conflicts which characterise modern capitalism.

Moreover, it is the ignorant supporters of religion whose naive, knee-jerk argument against Socialism is simply to object: "*But what about human nature? What of the greedy people, the lazy people?*"

They appear unaware that greed and laziness are actually encouraged by the capitalist system, whilst in a Socialist society the welfare of the individual would be dependent on and inseparable from the welfare of the community, and that, for long aeons before humans ever became 'civilised', competitive, violent and warlike, the normal forms of social interaction were based on principles of social cooperation and sharing. But, just as capitalism has not existed for ever, so one day, like its predecessors, it will be superseded by a new social system.

It is only in Socialism, based on common ownership, that humankind will be able to rediscover that customary ethic of fairness and social reciprocity which was the norm in prehistoric communities, which is still found in our primate cousins, and which still underlies our capitalist veneer of exploitation, competitiveness, violence and greed. While Socialism is the way forward, religion is simply an obsolete force of reaction, holding workers bogged down in an archaic mind-set, defending the indefensible, and passively accepting as God's Will the persistence of poverty, war and exploitation.

BLAIR'S LEGACY

Tony Blair wants to leave his mark on history. In March the political agenda of capitalism was dominated by the environment and Tony Blair tried to be more "*Green*" than Cameron in an attempt to "*save the planet*". A few days later Parliament then legislated for the renewal of weapons with the capability of destroying the planet. Some see a contradiction between a crusade for the environment and simultaneously pursuing a policy of potential environmental oblivion. However, capitalist politicians have to continually try to balance the competing demands of British capitalism as well as the sectional interests of the British capitalist class. Blair had to follow the needs of British

Capitalism over climate change and to defend the interests of British capitalism through military intervention even if the latter policy might result in wide-spread destruction of the planet. That is what capitalist politics is about; the pursuit of national interests however irrational and violent. So what is Blair's legacy? Well, the capitalist class have done equally well when Blair was Prime Minister as they did when Thatcher and Major were Prime Ministers. For the working class there is no difference between Labour and Tory Governments. They are both compelled to administer capitalism. Consequently, the working class remain exploited within the wages system. Workers are killing and have killed other workers on the battlefields of the world. And now Blair leaves the stage to become a very wealthy man. Blair's legacy for the working class-as it is for all capitalist leaders- is for workers to remain wage slaves. Brown's legacy will be no different.

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Three Swindles of Modern Economics and Politics (Conclusion)

III "In Memory of Alfred Nobel" Billboard

No doubt, the "**In Memory of Alfred Nobel**" billboard they raised was to block students' and workers' path to Marx's DAS CAPITAL and the PARIS COMMUNE PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY. Once again, they put up another prize-shield in the wake of resurgent waves of students and the youth seizing campuses, taking to the streets and squares in the late 1960s, which conceived of an awakening **socialist aspiration**, articulated in the inspiring radiant song by John Lennon in 1971, IMAGINE:

Imagine there's no heaven
It's easy if you try -
No hell below us
Above us only sky.
Imagine all the people
Living for today ...
Imagine there's no countries -
It isn't hard to do;
Nothing to kill or die for
And no religion too.
Imagine all the people
Living life in peace ...
Imagine no possessions -
I wonder if you can;
No need for greed or hunger,
A brotherhood of man.
Imagine all the people
Sharing all the world ...

You say that I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one.
I hope someday you'll join us
And the world will be as one.

Economic down turn, mass unemployment, poverty, hunger and famines surfaced again after the short spell of post-war reconstruction boom was over. The class struggle about reducing working hours and improving work conditions increasingly reversed. Trade unions - the organisations of the working class to carry on its daily struggles - became increasingly powerless in the face of the capitalist offensive.

Now the working class arrived at a point to turn to the Marxian solution to the problems. To prevent such a possibility the world, the capitalist class desperately invested in searching for another *swindle*, and got this one, so as again to distract our children, the youth and the workers, persuading them to look to economists instead of turning to Socialism and reading Marx.

You cannot rule by policing your property with batons, bullets, prisons and gallows only, you must police your would-be gravediggers' *brains* with a band of "*priests, in control of education*" (Einstein, *ibid.*) to preach your gospel about an 'employment career' to brainwash the young by catching them as kids. Schooling in infancy does the most vital upbringing towards later life. Without corrupting, distracting and crippling young minds with inculcating competitions for prizes, consisting of medals, diplomas, and some money awarded with fervid flamboyance, capitalism could not continue.

Make no mistake about what made THE OXFORD ENCYCLOPEDIC ENGLISH DICTIONARY twist the title as "*A Nobel Prize for economic sciences*" or the BRITANICA READY REFERENCE ENCYCLOPEDIA as "*the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences*". Such a distorted ascription is not the output of any disinterested lexicographical research, but is evidence of a biased intent to gloss over and glorify wage-slavery, mainly amid the student fraternity - the most sensitive group in the rapid learning phase. To learn the philology of a concept, they consult a dictionary first. Thus, for the ruling elites, the proper place to deceive and corrupt the young minds is a dictionary first.

The lie can be maintained only for such time as the State can shield the people from the political, economic and/or military consequences of the lie. It thus becomes vitally important for the State to use all of its powers to repress dissent, for the truth is the mortal enemy of the lie, and thus by extension, the truth becomes the greatest enemy of the State.

Dr. Joseph M. Goebbels, Nazi minister of propaganda, quoted by William Bowles, SLEEPWALKING INTO SLAVERY?

We wish we could spread across our message that *prize* and *punish* have been privileges of all exploiting classes in history, largely combining war-plunder-slaughter-enslave-steal with 'peace', hire with fire, promote with demote, and so on. They, the masters in antiquity, the feudal land-owners in the middle ages, and the capitalists in our time are the givers. The slaves, then the serfs, and now the wage-slaves are the takers - all alike with their services and disservices rendered at the behest of their masters' interests.

Socialists hate to 'prize' and 'punish' fellow humans

We do not mix up *prizes* with *presents*. Presents bring home relations of love that are priceless. Prizes posit relations of domination through competitions that have prices. Therefore, prizes from a parliament or from a bank do have their prices, and those receiving one must pay for it in terms of services. That is simply because a parliament lives on taxes and a bank on interests, partly sharing ownership and control of the system of *production for profit*.

Where does profit come from? It comes from *surplus value* that is *surplus social labour congealed in commodities*, realised via exchange on the market in terms of "*money, the universal form of labour in bourgeois society*" (Marx, A CONTRIBUTION TO THE CRITIQUE OF POLITICAL ECONOMY, p98).

How pathetic that the long detour of 'vulgar economics' sporting 'modern economics' via 'utility theory', Keynesianism, neo-Keynesianism, Beveridge's 'national insurance scheme', Milton Friedman's 'Monetarism' (in opposition to Keynesianism) through to 'welfare economics' fell under the sway of Thatcherism to close the cycle. In the 1980s, the British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, battered the last nail into the coffin of 'welfare economics' and the 'welfare state' with her trade-union reform, greatly increased privatisation, abolition of exchange controls, and heavy reduction of public spending.

Enough is enough. Yet, if such stuff is to your taste, you can daily read it all up in "*a sheet of lies, inanity, and ignorance called a newspaper*" (Morris) or read the world's huge library garbage 'in economic sciences' and listen to very many faith rousing "talking tools" called economists. They exist in their private universe of perverted humanity orchestrating a massive cover-up of their greatest perfidy *against the history of human evolution and the science of*

social relativity.

Socialists have nothing to learn from economists and peace leaders of any description, who belong in the great brotherhood against Marx and Socialism, no matter whether knowingly or unknowingly. Their 'economic' and 'political' sciences live up to their students' cataleptic compulsion to obtain certificates and prizes for a 'successful career' of wages-slavery, and to crippling perversion under the indoctrinating creed of competition, nothing else.

The working class can well dispense with such 'most eminent economists' and politicians preaching things in league with 'world leaders', whose guiding principle is to teach and order what they have not learned. You cannot educate the educators. What you can do is to organise politically and independently without leaders.

In elections, you should reject all 'reform' or 'minimum' programme parties, irrespective of their names and flags; and apply your number power via ballots to send only Socialist mandated MPs (as working class delegates) to Parliament to gain control of the machinery of government and abolish class power and privilege.

Then when any likely resistances from any misinformed recalcitrant groups will have been defeated and the useful functions of the state absorbed in the democratic administration of the affairs of life hastening its progressive dying out, you will have finished your pre-history of unfreedom to usher humanity into its history of freedom. Yes, it is as practical as that

THE RESULT OF A CLASSICAL EDUCATION

About 2,000 years ago the Roman historian Polybius wrote:

Since the masses of the people are inconstant, full of unruly desires, passionate and reckless of consequences, they must be filled with fears to keep them in order. The ancients did well, therefore, to invent Gods, and the belief in punishment after death.

The agents of the capitalist class; priests, imams and others are still inventing Gods and punishment after death to mentally enslave the working class. That is, unless you are stupid enough to become a martyr: then it's a sainthood or an eternity in heaven with virgins.

Workers should fear nothing: they are capable of reasoned thought and a rational appraisal of their own interests.

Thinking through the cause of the social problems the working class face like war, unemployment and poverty, they should begin to understand that religion is an opiate workers do not need. Workers should face social reality with sober senses and organise consciously and politically for the establishment of Socialism.

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Object and Declaration of Principles

Object

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

Declaration of Principles

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN HOLDS:

1. That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (ie land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. The Socialist Party of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

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